

**7 THE CITY OF ANGELS**  
Discover the sights  
behind the skyscrapers.

**8 MAKING THE GRADE**  
Students are worth more  
than a report card.

**11 FLYING TOO HIGH**  
Did greed and ego lead  
to the death of Jessica?

**RANCHO SANTIAGO COLLEGE**

# el Don

Volume 73, Number 7

17th at Bristol Street Santa Ana, California 92706

Friday, April 26, 1996

▼ What:

"pre-VIEW '96:  
RSC Arts"  
An inaugural  
exhibition featuring  
painting, sculpture,  
glass and clay

▼ Where:

207 N. Broadway,  
Suite Q, 2nd floor,  
historic, downtown  
Santa Ana,  
home of  
the Artists' Village

▼ When:

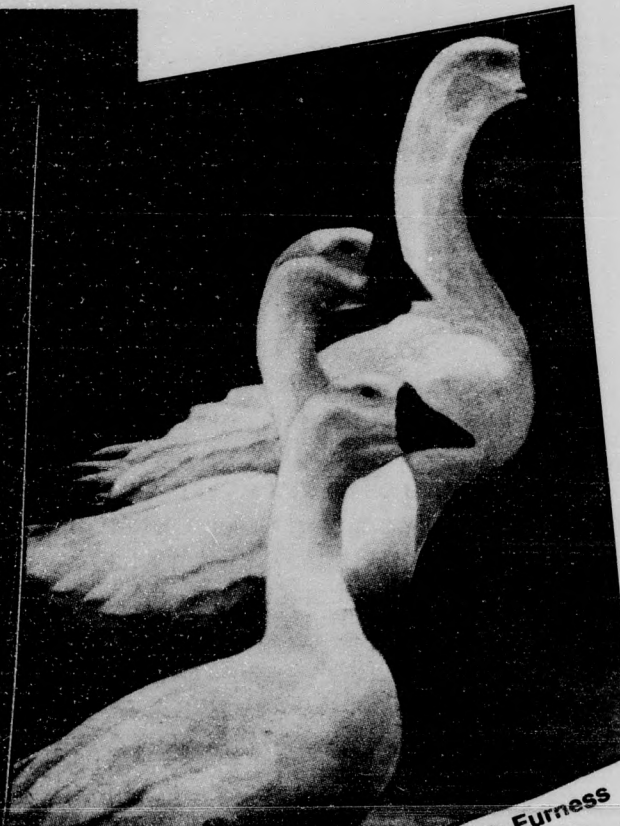
Through May 16,  
call 564-5600 for  
gallery hours

▼ Who:

Rancho students  
from the past five  
years to the present



'Untitled' oil on canvas by Woo Jung Kim



'White' oil on canvas by Edith Furness

## SANTORA



Right:  
'Purple  
Robe,'  
oil on  
canvas  
by Mark  
Nishimo



Right:  
Gene  
Isaacson,  
designer  
of RSC's  
gallery  
in the  
Santora  
Building

### Student artwork shines at the Artists' Village

Step into RSC's new Art Gallery for a good dose of sensory overload, and a captivating exhibit of artwork by some of the most talented students over the past five years.

Housed in the Santora Building behind large glass windowpanes, the gallery inside comes to life with art pieces displayed against bold blocks of color.

A neon sign announces the arrival of student works to a professional art complex.

Even those with the most discerning tastes can feast their eyes on an abundance of art including sculpture, paintings. Please see SANTORA, page 3



# NEWS BRIEFS

## WORLD

### VACATION WHILE WORKING ABROAD

College students who yearn to travel can do so through the Work Abroad program. The job opportunities range from technical writer at a Parisian bank to a roller-blading waiter at a London diner.

Sponsored by the Council on International Educational Exchange, nearly 6,000 U.S. students worked in eight countries last summer.

Students can work in Great Britain, Ireland, France, Germany, Canada, Jamaica, Costa Rica, and New Zealand.

Applications are accepted all year to work during any semester. Full-time students can enroll for a \$200 fee. For more information call (212) 661-1414, or visit the web site at <http://www.ciee.org/>.

## NATION

### HELP FOR STUDENT AID

Senator Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) plans to introduce an amendment to Senate Bill 1664 to exempt legal immigrant students from the deeming requirement.

Deeming requires students to report their sponsor's or sponsor's spouse's income. A sponsor's income isn't related to a student's ability to pay for a college education, according to Vivian Blevins in her Chancellor's update.

HR2202 is a bill that doesn't require legal immigrants to report their sponsor's income when they participate in federal student aid programs. It was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives, but is waiting for a decision from the U.S. Senate.

Rancho was ranked 10th in California among public colleges that have the most immigrant Pell Grant recipients in 1992-93. Of the Pell Grant recipients, 64.7% were legal immigrants.

To support HR2202, students can call Diane Feinstein at (202) 224-3841 or Barbara Boxer at (202) 224-3553.

## NATION

### CIGAR SOCIETY PUFFS ALONG

IOWA -They might not be too choosy about the swill they drink on weekends, but there's one thing some University of Iowa students know how to enjoy: a good cigar.

About 40 members of the Iowa Cigar Society have been puffing away at monthly meetings since January, when the group qualified for student-club status with the university's student-government association.

The club was created to cultivate "an enjoyable and relaxing atmosphere in which connoisseurs may gather, share and further their knowledge on the essence of cigars."

Despite cancer warnings, one of Iowa's more unusual student clubs has attracted local residents and at least one woman to its ranks. However, the group must hold its meetings at a local restaurant.

Smoking is not allowed in campus meeting rooms.

## CAMPUS

### SALUTE TO ASIAN COMMUNITIES

RSC celebrates the Asian Communities on Tuesday, April 30. Family members and students impacted by the Vietnam war will share their personal experiences.

The salute begins with a panel at 9 a.m. in U-201A to discuss personal war memories. At noon in the Amphitheater, there will be a joint color guard consisting of U.S. and South Vietnamese military veterans and a presentation of colors by the 18th Airborne Division.

Asian leadership within the community will be in U-204ABC at 5 p.m. Chancellor Vivian Blevins will facilitate a writer's workshop at 6 p.m. in U-204C to reflect on the Vietnam Era. An evening panel workshop will focus on the Vietnam veteran from 7 to 10 p.m. in room U-201A.

## CAMPUS

### GET OUT THE VOTE

Spring elections are upon us. Students with proper identification can vote April 29 and 30 on the Santa Ana Campus from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Students at the Orange Campus can vote at the same times on May 1 and 2.

-Compiled by el Don Staff



Armando Mugica / el Don Photo

The new Home Base nears completion across the street from the delayed Chavez Building.

# Structural problems plague Chavez project

## Columns in the new computer and technology building are out of plumb.

By Ryan Murphy  
el Don Staff Writer

**I**f finished by its new tentative completion date of Oct. 15, Phase One of the Cesar Chavez Computer Building project will be over five months behind schedule.

Several problems have contributed to delaying the original completion date of May 6; the most recent related to the structure.

The district inspector brought it to the attention of the contractor two weeks ago that some of the columns in the building were "out of plumb" - not precisely vertical.

A survey company hired by the district after the inspectors initial report determined that 22 of the columns in the building varied from being perfectly vertical.

Although no building is perfect, a three quarters of an inch variance in the straightness of columns from top to bottom is acceptable. Six of the columns in the Cesar Chavez building exceed the guideline by up to two inches.

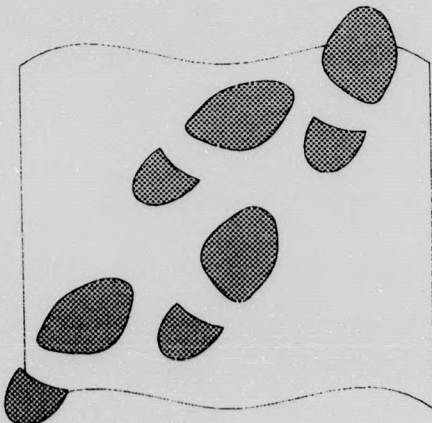
Bob Partridge, the Administrative Dean of Facility Planning is responsible for any planning or construction that may occur on campus. Having overseen this project for the district since its inception in December of 1994, he was concerned whether the structural safety of the building had been compromised in any way.

"I have heard rumors about the building being two feet off and that is not true," Partridge said. "I received a letter last Tuesday from the structural engineers stating that no structural safety was compromised, however, the contractor

Please see PROBLEMS, page 5

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## SANTORA:

Continued from Page 1

drawings and glass.

Glass sculptures mark the return of the glass program to Rancho's Art Department this semester. One of the blown glass pieces featured, "Remember the Dance," revives a dying art form. Artist Seija Gerdt uses an array of curved glass rods to form the outline of a woman.

Gene Isaacson explained the importance of glass in the show at the opening's reception on Thursday. "We wanted to emphasize glass," Isaacson said. "Rhys Williams came from Claremont college to head up the program at RSC, and we are one of the few colleges to have the program."

Although students are expected to purchase their own glass for projects, they remain dedicated to the program.

Among the exhibits is a piece that brings character and originality to the show. The clay sculpture titled the "Myan Lord," created by Juan Hernandez, resembles an animal warrior.

Two pieces, to the right of the gallery's door, add variety to the show. "Purple Robe", by Mark Nishimo, uses bold color to attract attention to his portrait of a woman.

The other piece depicts a local road with artistic flair. In this drawing, Geoff Krueger uses charcoal to create a dramatic picture in "Study for Trabuco Road."

Though there are many different mediums used in the pieces, viewers can appreciate the gallery's uniqueness. The layout was designed by Isaacson and David Aepli, the gallery's general contractor.

Aepli was thrilled about working on the project. "You don't always get to use your creativity like you do here," he said.

The ingenuity of design really shows through the use of color. "I think the design is somewhat flashy and out of the ordinary, but still respects the building," said Aepli.

Although the studio is on a two-year lease, Isaacson would like to see further expansion of the arts. "We hope to lease more spaces where we can do dance and theater," he said.

## PRESERVING WILDLIFE

### Biology students assemble lion skeleton

By Anh Nguyen  
el Don Staff Writer

A Biology 203 class on the Orange Campus connected with a headless lion last week. Students are in the process of assembling its skeletal remains.

The female mountain lion was shot by a rancher in Northern California this year, with permission from the Department of Fish and Game, because the lion killed livestock.

Jim Simpkon, a park ranger at Irvine, requested the lion's remains, but the head and pelt were sent to Crystal Cove Park. Simpkon contacted Charleen Powers, a zoology teacher at the Orange campus and she volunteered to assemble the bones for him.

It was a first time experience for the students and Powers. The assembled mountain lion skeleton will be displayed in a museum in Irvine Park.

"This is a way to get students involved in community service," Powers said. "What a great lab experience."

The major difficulties in the assembly was deciding which bones belonged to the lion's left or right side and identifying the feet and tail bones. After identification, the students tag the left and right sides with colored thread. A cat skeleton and diagrams were used as models to compare the lion's bones.

If the class can't complete the assembly, Powers said she would finish it. She has taught at RSC for the past 10 years and is currently the science lab coordinator for chemistry and biology classes.

Powers is concerned about the plight of the mountain lions, especially with the



Don Dixon / el Don Photo

Charleen Powers, a zoology teacher at the Orange campus, displays the vertebrae of a mountain lion donated by the Department of Fish & Game.

appearance of Proposition 197. "Under the guise of more control, this proposition seeks to resume trophy hunting," she said.

Proposition 117 was passed in 1990, giving full protection to mountain lions in California. Although Proposition 197 failed to pass, the margin of victory wasn't as wide as Powers wanted.

The problem, according to Powers, is that humans are encroaching on the lion's habitat through development of homes or hiking and running trails.

In the last 100 years, two people have been killed by mountain lions when they entered the lion's territory. "More people are killed by domestic dogs than are killed by mountain lions," Powers said.

Historically, lions who attack people or

livestock are immature male lions who have recently left their mothers, and are trying to establish a territory. The lion killed by the rancher was female, weighing about 120 pounds.

The female arrived in the area within a week after a male lion was spotted. The Department of Fish and Game issues a permit to kill a lion only if it kills livestock.

"A healthy animal attacks stock because of an instinctive behavior of stalking," Powers said.

After receipt of a lion's corpse, butchers carve off as much meat as possible. The remaining flesh is eaten clean by domestic beetles. The bones are then bleached, assembled, and displayed.

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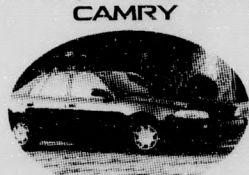
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# Student services receive boost

▼ **Counselors at Orange coordinate financial aid, tutoring and career planning**

By Anh Nguyen  
el Don Staff Writer

After ten years of limited or nonexistent student services, five women are increasing opportunities at the Orange Campus.

Kathy Gutierrez, Instructional Center technician, operates the tutoring center. It opened on a limited basis this month and should be available full-time by the start of the summer. Although there is no organized tutoring for most subjects, math students can find help.

Existing tutors work through the Santa Ana Campus or their instructors. Gutierrez is in the pro-

cess of hiring tutors to be available by appointment.

She plans to add an English writing area to help students on a walk-in basis. Six computers and a printer will also be added to the center.

Gutierrez ran the Writing Center on the Santa Ana Campus on a part-time basis for five years. In addition, she was a part-time tutor for English, ESL, and history. Gutierrez is a Rancho graduate with liberal arts and history degrees.

Janet Hermosillo is a financial aid coordinator in charge of developing financial aid services to help students in need at the Orange Campus. "Some students don't apply for financial aid because they don't believe they qualify," Hermosillo said. "There are a lot of different people who are financially needy."

Please see SERVICES, page 5



Members of the Orange Campus counseling center: Ashley Nguyen, Rejoice Rodarte, Kathy Gutierrez, Leonor Aguilera, and Dora Contreras-Bright.

Don Dixon / el Don Photo

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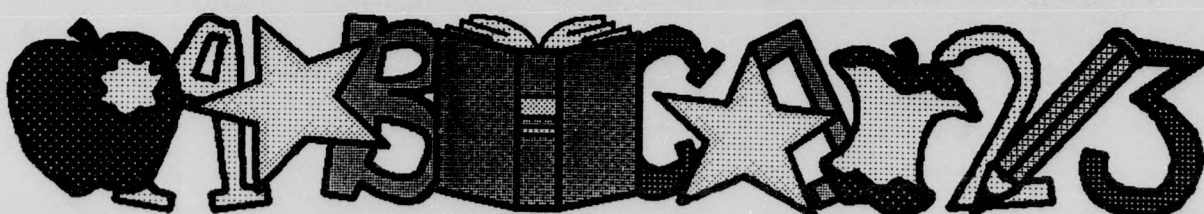
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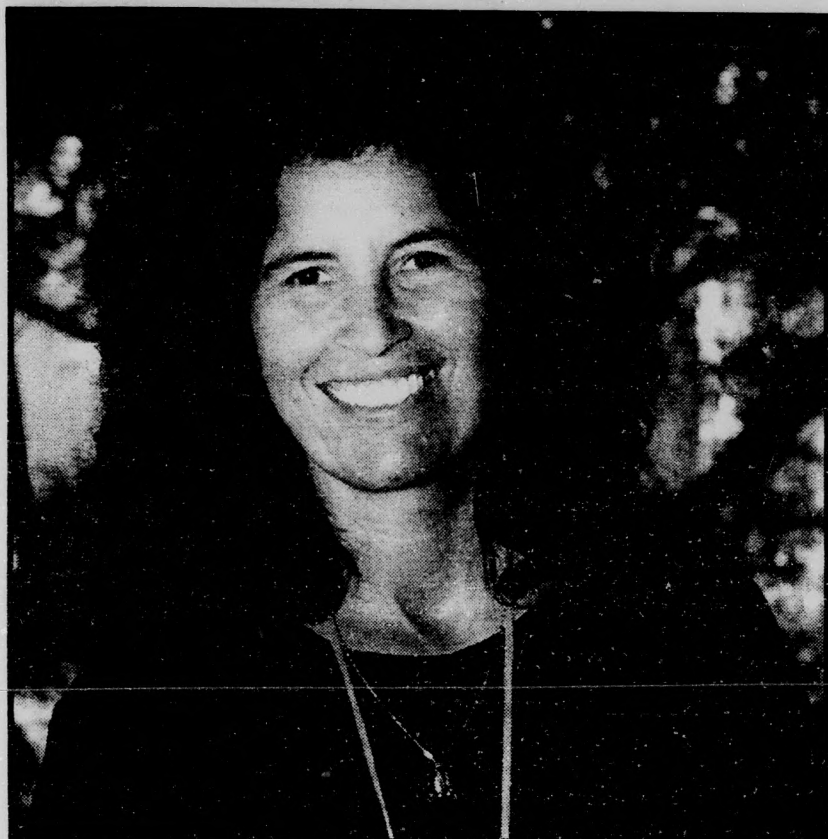
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Rosa Perez, Dean of Student Services at the Orange Campus.

## Perez places students first

By Anh Nguyen  
el Don Staff Writer

Rosa Perez cares. As the Dean of Student Services at the Orange Campus since last July, she has worked with the district to establish new centers for financial aid, EOPs, tutoring, career guidance, and transfer.

Her main goal is to develop student services to meet the needs of students attending Orange Campus.

Although she is a successful woman, Perez hasn't forgotten her past. "I'm no different than most of the students that come to Rancho," Perez said.

Her mother worked in a factory making fireplace screens by hand. Her father abandoned the family. As the oldest of four children, Perez

also had the added stress of being the first person in her family to attend college.

She attended City College of San Francisco. The campus resembled the Santa Ana Campus, but it was more diverse and there were more Asians. "School changed my life," Perez said.

Perez wanted to drop out and go to work, but her counselor urged her to continue. Even in high school, her counselors were working to keep her from dropping out. They gave her information and applications about colleges, opening her eyes to the possibilities.

With hard work and dedication, Perez received a full scholarship to Stanford University. She graduated with a bachelor's degree in Latin American Literature. She received a master's degree in counseling.

In 1975, Perez returned to City College of San Francisco where she worked in student services for 18 years.

At a Latino Leadership Conference, Perez heard about the position of Dean of Student Affairs at the Orange Campus.

"Community colleges have been cutting since 1978, scaling services and programs back. It's hard to cut when I believe that everything is needed by the students," Perez said. "This is the first job that allows me to create something from scratch."

Perez is interested in serving all students attending the Orange Campus, whether they are low-income minorities or from middle-class families.

"I want to create opportunities for them that I had in my life," Perez said.



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## SERVICES:

Continued from Page 4

She opened services and information to the students. Currently, Hermosillo offers financial aid workshops, counseling, and more. Her 16 years of experience in the financial aid office at Santa Ana is an asset to students.

"Please come in and use the services in order to find out what you qualify for. There are many financial aid and scholarship programs available," Hermosillo said. May 1 is the last day to apply for financial aid for next year.

Leonor Aguilera is the Transfer Center specialist.

Her goal is to educate students on the resources available to them pertaining to transfer.

She wants to organize workshops, take trips to potential transfer schools, and have representatives come speak to the students.

Aguilera graduated from the University of California at Berkeley in '94 with a social welfare bachelor's degree. She worked for a year in the Assessment Center at the East Los Angeles Community College, giving entrance exams and working in outreach to local high schools.

Aguilera wants to become a counselor and may study for a Counsel-

ing master's degree.

Dora Contreras-Bright is the Career Guidance Specialist. Her goal is to have a one-to-one contact with students.

Together, they will go through career information and resources so the student will walk away from the session knowing as much as possible.

She plans to organize workshops in which employers talk to students about specific careers.

Contreras-Bright was a labor market analyst for 14 years. She worked for the Regional Occupational program and was involved in vocational education through the Orange County Department of Education.

Rejoice Rodarte is the Student Services Specialist. She is the linkage to the Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) program on the Santa Ana Campus.

She recruits and informs students about the variety of services available through EOPS. Rodarte also advises students, monitors their progress, and is a resource person.

Students with problems ranging from utility payments, childcare, social services, and more can contact Rodarte for help.

## PROBLEMS:

Continued from Page 2

needs to submit how the rest of the building will compensate for the flaws in the columns."

According to Partridge, the "skin" of the building must be straight and true even though the columns underneath may be less than perfectly straight. This may take additional work and time for the contractor to correct.

Phase Two of the project will entail tearing down the existing district computer building and turning the site into a parking lot for the new Cesar Chavez Building. This will take an estimated 70 additional days after the finish date of the Chavez building, putting the completion for the entire project somewhere around the beginning of 1997.

No additional funding will be required from the district for the completion of the \$11.9 million project since every problem that has arisen has been the responsibility of the contractor.

There is some discussion of a law suit being filed against the contracting company, Swinerton and Walberg, but all parties involved have declined comment.

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Mariah Carey
3. **You're the One**  
SWV
4. **1,2,3,4 (Sumpin' New)**  
Coolio
5. **Down Low (Nobody Has to...)**  
R. Kelly
6. **Count on Me**  
Whitney Houston & CeCe Winans
7. **Nobody Knows**  
Tony Rich Project
8. **Release Me**  
Angelina
9. **All the Things (Your Man...)**  
Joe
10. **Woo-Hah! Got You All in Check**  
Busta Rhymes

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1. **'Immortal Beloved' Soundtrack**  
Various artists
2. **Chant**  
Benedictine Monks of Santo...
3. **Chant II**  
Benedictine Monks of Santo...
4. **The Three Tenors in Concert...**  
Carreras, Domingo, Pavarotti
5. **A Portrait**  
Cecilia Bartoli
6. **In Concert**  
Carreras, Domingo, Pavarotti
7. **Miracles of Saintiago**  
Anonymous 4, Harmonia Mundi
8. **From Holland With Love**  
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9. **Prokofiev: Romeo and Juliet**  
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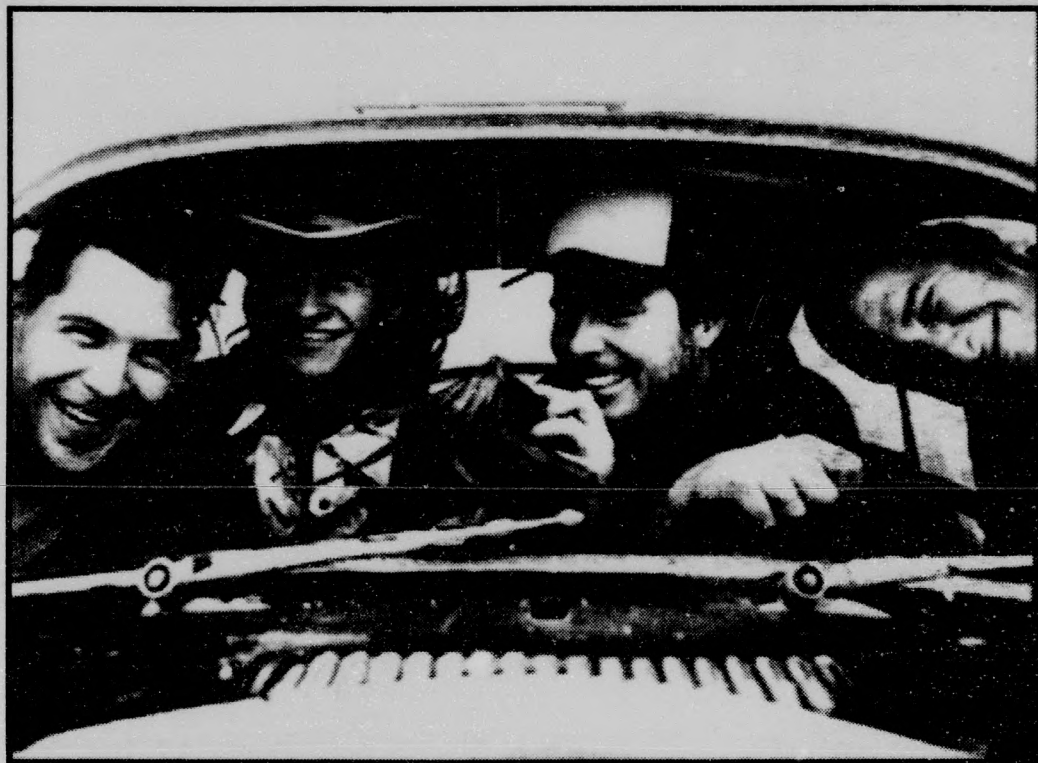


Photo Courtesy of Mercury Records

## Out Of The Bin New CD's rock, roll fizzle

### 16 Horsepower

Visions of Nicholas Cage walking into the OK Coral are conjured up in "Sackcloth 'n' Ashes". Either of the band's CD's could be soundtracks for the next David Lynch film. The band masterfully culminates fiddles and banjos into the alternative rock scene.

### Bare Naked Ladies

"If I had a million dollars" I would definately buy this CD. The band has an upbeat album whose lyrics play with the millionaire in you. Whether you play the lotto or not, this is a must have.

### Menswe@r

If you threw Morrissey and Credence Clearwater in a blender (after you cleaned up the mess), you'd get this album.

### Lustre

Soundgarden meets Jefferson Starship

### Pee Shy

Winner of the most creative award, "Who let all the monkeys out?" is fun, fun, fun. Track 3, "Jason, I thought I saw a UFO" is a zany spoof on the chosen few who have been visited by creatures from other dimensions.

### Super 8

Lenny Kravitz influences prevail in this super funk, retro rock album.

### Therapy?

About as hard core as they come, make sure you take this one with you when skateboarding, skydiving or mountain biking.

### Marion

Ever heard the Seattle sound from London? The lead singer definately has. This CD makes you reminiscent for the U2, Cure days.

**RATINGS:** The Bomb - **\*\*\*\*\***  
M-80 - **\*\*\*\*\*** Scud - **\*\*\*\*\*** Dud - **\*\*\*\*\***

## Refreshments Satisfy New taste in alternative pop

By Christine Villegas  
el Don Views Editor

Whatever this band lacks in experience, they make up for in an exuberant performance.

Band members Buddy, Brian, Roger and P.H., imitate a "Presidents of the United States of America" groove.

In less quirky moments, a "Gin Blossoms"/"Toad the Wet Sprocket" influence is evident.

Lead vocals never leave a safe range. However, sincere lyrics about the troubles of blue collar life - or a man who doesn't want to lose his "girly" - create an emotional enthusiasm otherwise missing.

Giddy, talking guitar riffs, reminiscent of the swing era, are used over and over in

the songs. But the underlying popular jazz style make the listener comfortable enough to sing along or grab a partner and start dancing.

These '50s sounding, southwest-grunge musicians play rock n' roll love ballads, like "Mexico," that would make Jimmy Buffet cry.

"Mekong" invokes desert sounds, wooing the listener into staying a little longer.

The cover of this album is a definite eye catcher, featuring a cartoon of a woman - suitable for the wing of a fighter plane - that any man would love to meet.

This group definitely knows what sells and how to have fun with the listener. With a little more studio time, they'll soon be a household name. Buy the CD, and attend a refreshing concert soon.

# And the Beat goes on...

### Spring Choral Concert Sunday, April 28

RSC's Master and Concert Chorale will feature the Festival orchestra and soloists singing music from the great composers of Europe. The concert will take place at First Presbyterian Church of Orange (191 N. Orange Street). General Admission is \$8, students, seniors, and staff, \$6. Call 564-5661

### I Love You, But... Tuesday, April 30

Director Peter Wolf and writer Lawrence Fleischer will sign autographs and discuss their new film "I Love You, But..." on Tuesday, April 30. It is a romantic comedy about a deaf woman and a hearing man who struggle with communication conflicts. The film premieres at the AMC Theaters inside Main Place Mall in Santa Ana, and is a fund raising event for the Hearing Impaired Program at RSC. Showings are at 5:30p.m. and 7:30p.m. Tickets are \$10 at the door. Call 564-6283-V, or 564-6284-TTY

### The Quest Opens Today

Jean-Claude Van Damme makes his directing debut in "The Quest," a modern day pirate adventure filled with conquest. Van Damme must also prove himself in an all out battle against the world's top fighters.

This film is sure to deliver electrifying fight scenes in typical Van Damme fashion, showcasing his skill in the martial arts.

Also starring is Roger Moore, of the "James Bond" films.



### Sunset Park Opens Today

Danny DeVito directs the new film "Sunset Park" which also stars his wife, Rhea Perlman.

Perlman stars as Phyllis, the new coach of the boy's basketball team at Sunset Park High.

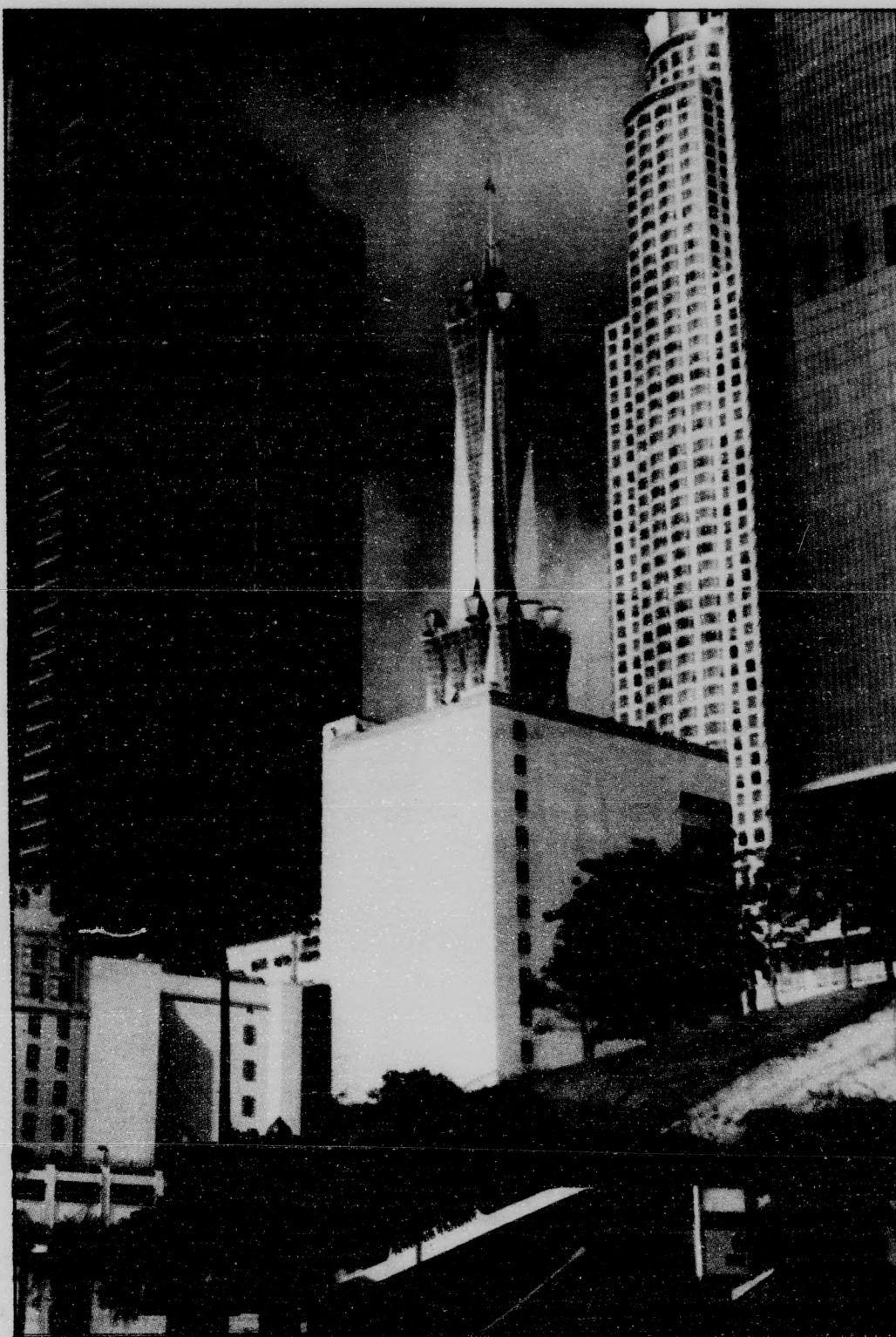
Although she takes on the job knowing nothing about the game, Phyllis realizes the importance of bringing the team together, despite the players objections to having a female coach.

The film also brings a lot of fresh, new talent to the screen.





Los Angeles.  
The name can  
bring a twinkle  
to the eye of  
an eager  
tourist, or a  
cringe to an  
exasperated  
commuter.  
Whatever the  
reason for  
visiting,  
everyone has  
their own ...



LEFT:  
The newly  
reopened  
Angels Flight  
is dwarfed by  
the glimmer of  
Downtown's  
prominent  
skyscrapers.



ABOVE: Hop Louie's  
pagoda restaurant is typical  
of Chinatown's architecture.  
BELOW: Shoppers often  
spend the entire day finding  
good deals while soaking up  
local color on Olvera Street.

# L.A.



# STORY

Story by  
Jennifer  
Okamoto

**W**hen touring L.A., you'll want to bring along a few necessities. A Thomas Guide has a detailed map of Downtown in the front, along with a list of points of interest. A roll of quarters for meter parking is essential. Don't forget a camera, film, some spending money and you're set.

Established in 1781, Downtown L.A. is filled with unique architecture. The California Plaza is a great place to relax and visit the Museum of Contemporary Art, located within the

same structure. Access to the Plaza is by escalator on Third Street.

From Downtown there are a variety of places nearby to visit. To sample a taste of the melting pot, check out Little Tokyo, Olvera Street, and Chinatown.

Shop Downtown and at the Jewelry and Garment districts nearby for deals. But if you happen to have a few extra dollars, try Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills. The shops sport prices that rival the Downtown skyscrapers. Also be sure to visit the new Museum of

Television and Radio, where you can relive your favorite programs.

When the sun is about to set, your best bet is Venice Beach. From there, pass through the (literally) sparkling streets of Hollywood, and stop to match your hand and foot prints with those of the stars at Grauman's Chinese Theater.

Finally, a night drive home via Highway 101 will leave you with a breathtaking view of the city; a mass of lighted structures so high and bright, it could only be called the City of Angels.

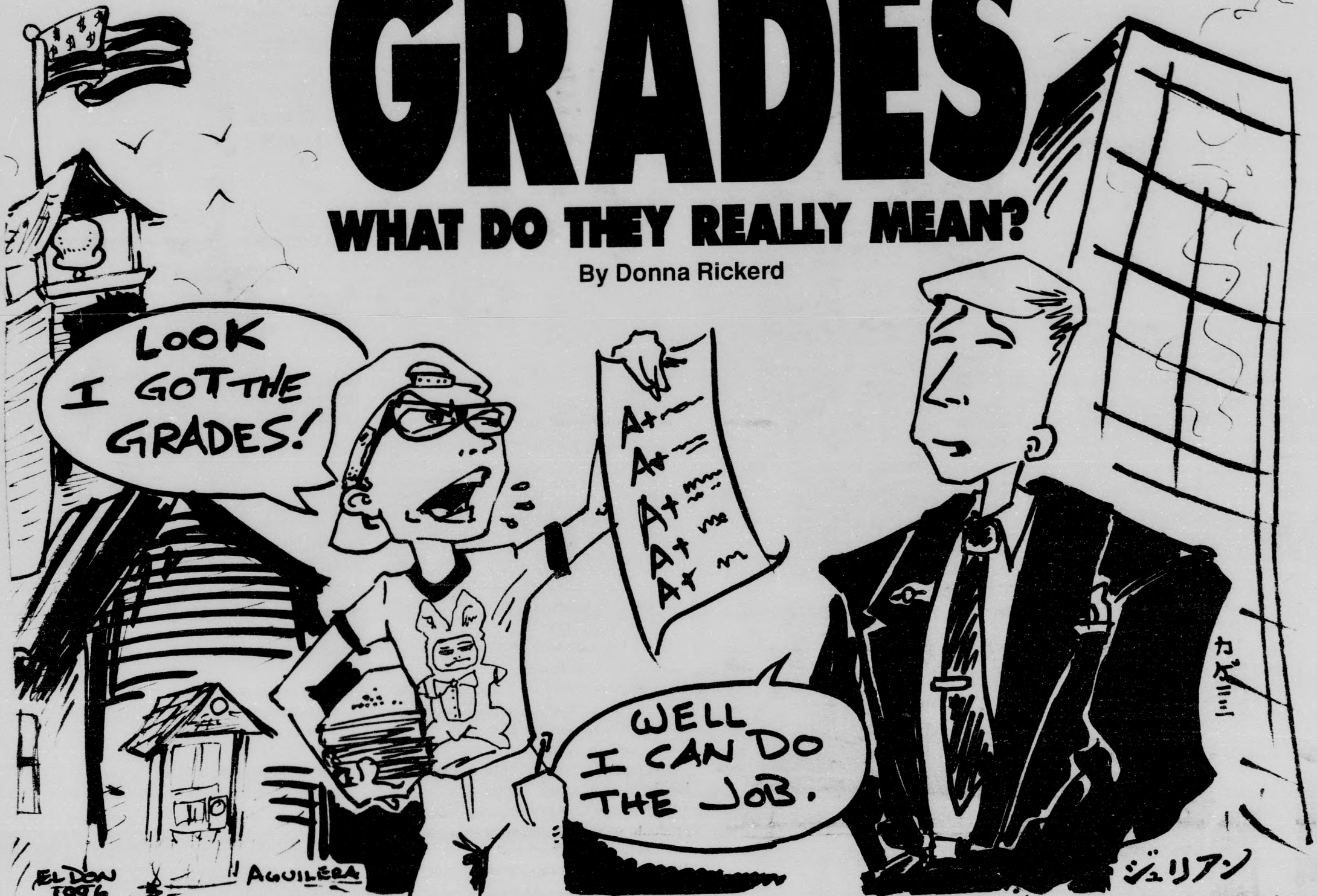
Photos by  
Armando  
Mugica



# GRADES

## WHAT DO THEY REALLY MEAN?

By Donna Rickerd



It's that time of the semester again. Final exams. Research papers. Study marathons until you just can't take it anymore, and your eyes and brain scream: stop! Yes, it's the end of the semester and time for your final grades. Those significant letters that affect your overall grade point average, and mean so much for a scholarship or a transfer to a good college.

But just what do your grades really mean, anyway?

Most of us were brought up to believe that we needed to take home A's and B's on our report cards. If we did, our parents would smile and say, "good!" The C's maybe we could get a little artistic with. Kind of add a couple loops on the front? That is, if we could find a pen with ink like the teacher's. And of course, if we were unscrupulous (which we weren't).

But all that's changed now that we're in college. We study more. We smile more at the professor. We buy fifty dollar textbooks and don't remember what's in most of them by the end of the next term. But we still want those A's and B's on our transcripts.

Well, rumor has it we can relax a little. Many educational evaluators are saying that traditional grades are generally not accepted as reliable, valid, or a true measurement of a student's actual skill or knowledge. And college admissions offices and employers look at a lot more than grades when they evaluate a potential candidate.

For example, they look at your test scores. Your GPA in core disciplinary subjects. Your curricular content, or the height and breadth of what you studied. Some even give tests of their own. The reason they do this is because grades are not really all that objective.

How so? According to Nancy Mansberger, who is pursuing her doctorate in educational research from Western Michigan University, there is no way of knowing what an "A" in a subject means from course to course or from professor to professor. Its meaning also varies from university to university.

There are several things it could reflect. For example, does the grade indicate mastery of a subject, or "excellent compliance to class requirements?"

Does it mean the student tried his/her hardest, and did all the work, or does it mean, no, they didn't do all the

work, but they clearly demonstrated mastery of all subject matter? Or maybe it means they attended on time every-day and their attitude was good?

Wait. The criteria continues. Could it mean they didn't master everything, but did extra work in the areas they did understand? Does it mean the teacher liked them? Does it mean they progressed in their ability or knowledge more than anyone else, despite starting and ending at different levels of ability?

There is also a problem of severe overgrading because of social and political pressure, a sort of "grade inflation". For example, in a study conducted by Arthur Levine while at Harvard University, he found that students with grades of A-minus or higher increased from 22 percent in 1966 to 43 percent in 1991. The grade of C, which usually means "average" performance, was rarely seen, and over 90 percent of the grades were B-minus or higher.

At Smith College, the proportion of A's and B's reached 89.3 percent. The trend continued at Princeton, where 80 percent of undergraduates received nothing but A's and B's, and at Stanford University where only 8 percent got C's and D's - none getting F's.

Does this mean undergraduate's brains were growing, like an educational evolution? No, in fact there was a shrinkage. During this period, there was no evidence to suggest that the academic attainment of students had gone up proportionately. Instead, on the national level, the verbal and math scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test had dropped to a notably lower level in 1991 as compared with 1969.

It also seems to matter what a student's major is. The trend at Harvard and elsewhere shows that high grades are particularly pronounced in the humanities. The average grade point average for humanities is between an A-minus and a B-plus, in the social sciences, between a B and B-plus, and in the natural sciences, between a B-minus and a B. A recent study at Stanford university found that students in the humanities had the highest grades, while those in engineering received the lowest. It was also noted that the arts typically graded the highest, while physical sciences and mathematics dragged down the lowest.

Easier grading at the undergraduate level is also often related to student ratings of teachers. Research in varied

disciplines showed significant relation between student ratings of professors and the expected grades of the students. For example, in a national survey of the deans of colleges of education and the colleges of arts and sciences, over 70 percent of the respondents agreed that the use of student evaluations was a major reason for grade inflation.

In other words, the teacher wants to be popular.

What else could possibly affect your grade? Well, there was a survey on faculty grading practices at Virginia Polytechnic. They found that, when deciding between which of two grades to assign to borderline students, 74 percent indicated they would reward exceptional effort with higher grades, and 50 percent said they would punish disruptive behavior with lower grades. Even a student's negative attitude toward a course could affect their grades. So watch it with the teacher jokes.

At most universities, faculty members know their responsibility to communicate to students how grades will be determined in their classes. Almeta Stokes, a professor of educational psychology at Howard University, says that typically, a course syllabus indicates the number and types of tests to be administered, and how much each test, assignment or other requirement will count toward the final determination.

Also, many faculty members indicate the percentage ranges associated with each letter grade, suggesting an absolute performance standard, even though they may add or subtract points to ensure that a reasonable numbers of students receive each grade.

And it's not like your grade of A is equal to Mary's. The borderline between grade grouping is always arguable. For example, if points for a B range from 80 to 89, students at both ends of that range get the same grade, even though their marks differ by nine points. The student with 79 points, possessing only a one point distinction, is struck with a C.

Many believe it is imperative that grades indicate levels of attainment only, and not unrelated factors such as effort, attitude, or class participation.

Even the appearance of a student's work can influence a professor's evaluation. Students are entitled to receive objectively determined grades that accurately indicate their status of achievement. It all gives new meaning to grading on the curve, doesn't it?



By Colleen DeBaise

# does COLLEGE pay?

## A new census report says it does

**F**irst as a waitress, then as the manager of an appliance repair store, Kristen Ross took some time off from college so she could earn some extra cash. "In both cases, I learned very quickly that there is no money without education," she said.

At the repair store, she made roughly \$14,400 a year. "After a few months on that salary, I couldn't wait to get back to school and finish my mechanical engineering bachelor's degree," recalls Ross, now a graduate engineering student at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. "They make about \$30,000 a year shortly after graduation."

What Ross has observed about the economic rewards of a professional degree is affirmed in a recent U.S. Census Report on the value of higher education.

While a high school drop-out could expect to make only \$508 a month, a person with a bachelor's degree averaged almost five times that amount, or \$2,269 in 1993, the study reveals. A person with an advanced degree can expect to make even more, about \$3,331 a month, the study found.

For those in pursuit of a degree, there's more good news. Compared to a similar Census Bureau report conducted in 1984, the 1993 average earnings of high school graduates have gone up 22 percent, while the salary gains of college grads were almost double that, or 47 percent.

The reports seems to confirm what teachers, parents and high school guidance counselors have always said: it pays to get a degree.

"If it weren't for my amazing undergraduate experience," said Jacqueline L. Gordon, a graduate sociology student at Princeton University and the first in her working-class Kansas family to finish college. "I would probably be back in Hays (Kan.) working at Walmart trying to support three kids."

Still, many young Americans investing in what is increasingly a costly college degree are dubious about its value in an economy that often seems overshadowed by downsizing and cutbacks.

"I have mixed feelings about the value of education," said Melanie Smith, a graduate psychology student at Arizona State University. "I know if I can get a job I will make a lot more money than someone with less education, but lately it seems the key word is 'if.'"

Although she still thinks education is valuable, "we will have to be more flexible in the future as to what kinds of jobs we will take," she added.

Flexibility is only part of the 1990s job search, said Kevin Boyer, executive director of the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students.

While the statistics are encouraging, students should not be fooled by them, Boyer added. It's up to each student to make his or her degree valuable, he said.

In the last few years, "there has been a real significant change in psychology in the way people view their job prospects," he said, adding that he has witnessed "real anxiety that seems to cross every degree boundary."

Boyer, who works mostly with students who are earning advance degrees, said he hears "horror stories of people who go to interviews, and there are 15 positions opening up in the whole country for their academic discipline, and 150 people show up for the interview."

What all this means, he added, is that students can't assume that simply getting a degree will assure them the job they want. "The answer to all this is for each student to do their research," he said. "Begin the job search well in advance."

Not only should students become more flexible about what jobs they'll accept, but they should develop what Boyer calls an "ends-result" mentality. "The purpose of this process you're going through is to get a job," he said. Even freshman in college should "prepare as if you're looking for the job immediately."

Because of the often fierce job market, students should constantly check help-wanted ads in newspapers and job listings on the Internet to determine what the market is like for their chosen field. If there aren't many employment opportunities, then students "need to switch (their focus) in a rather short period of time," he said.

Aside from an economy in which many corporations are "downsizing," the increased competition for jobs also may stem from the fact that more people are getting college degrees. By 1993, more than one out of four adults, or 27 percent, had obtained a degree of some type beyond high school, a substantial increase over the 21 percent reported in 1984, according to the study.

Although women were less likely than men to have an advanced degree, 28 percent of men and 26 percent of women held degrees beyond high school—only a slight gap, the study revealed.

In 1984, 23 percent of men and only 19 percent of women held degrees.

The study found a significant link between the degree's discipline area and its economic reward. As might be expected, degrees in the disciplines of law and medicine/dentistry had the highest average monthly earnings of \$4,353 and \$5,049, respectively.

For those completing bachelor's degree, monthly earnings ranged from \$3,189 in engineering to only about \$1,699 for education majors. Those with majors in the liberal art/humanities could not expect much more than education majors, or \$1,733.





# Views

PAGE 10

RANCHO SANTIAGO COLLEGE el Don

FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 1996

## STAFF EDITORIALS

### Start a political revolution, vote

In past Associated Student Government elections, about one percent of the student population has utilized voting power to make important campus decisions.

Voter apathy runs rampant, even in college, because many think student government doesn't affect them - not so. The \$7 student activities fee was created, in part, by student government to provide more money for student activities.

Money is still allocated to these programs regardless of how many students actually attend the events. If more students vote, maybe ASG will be more aware of the amount of students they should be catering to.

When students vote, candidates are held accountable by a greater majority and are more conscientious of their actions.

Many students, just like many members of society, feel that their vote doesn't count. The only time it doesn't count, is when it isn't used.

Students should be savvy enough, not only to vote, but to make an educated vote.

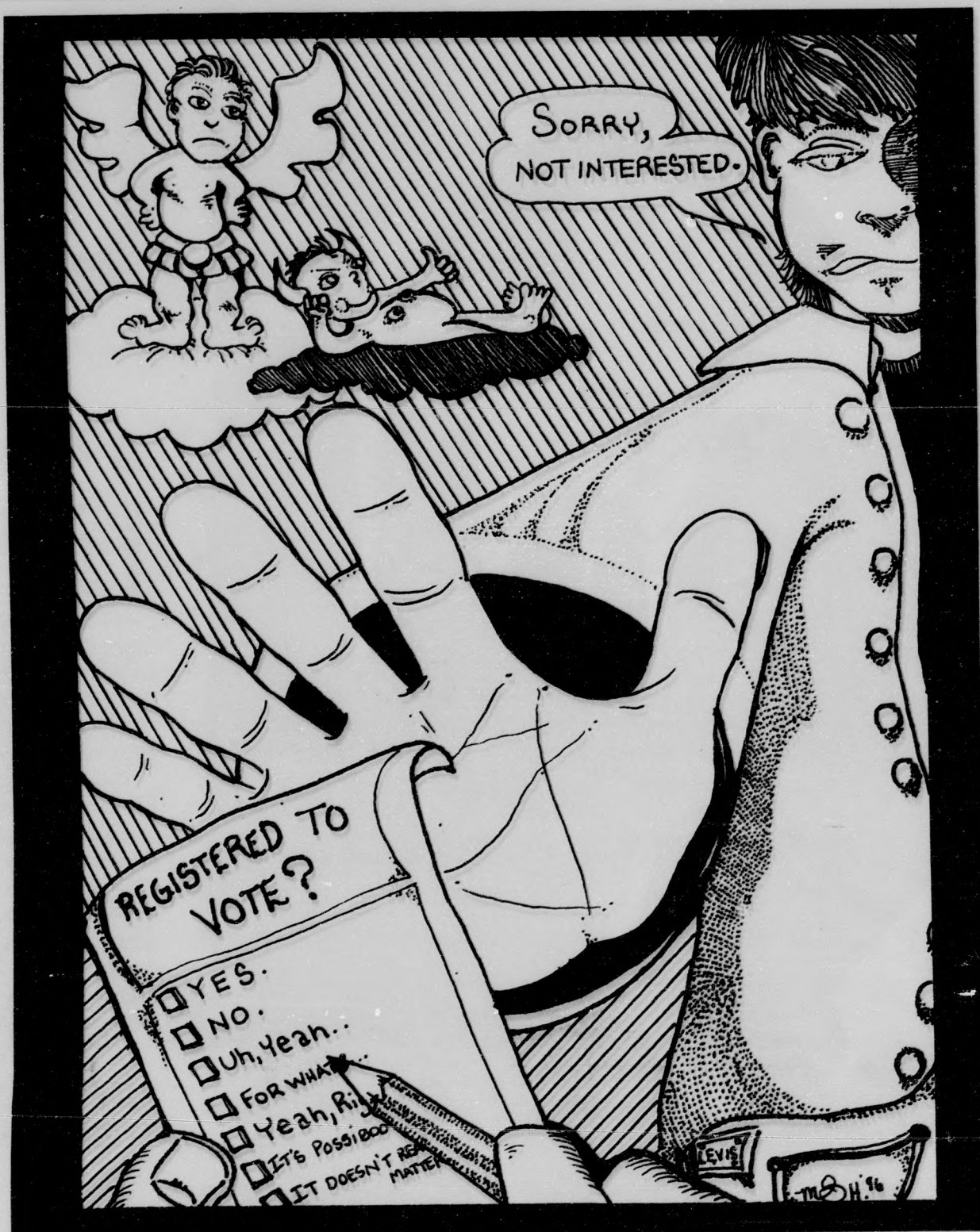
Listen to the candidates and find out where they stand. Ignore their nice smiles and catchy campaign slogans.

Consider why they are running and what they've done for Rancho students in the past.

These candidates should not cater to the two or three hundred students who normally cast ballots, the majority of students on campus should make themselves heard.

College students concerned about registration fees and programs, should utilize their intellectual capabilities of voting and questioning those in control of their money.

These candidates want to represent us, but they need to know who they are representing. Meet them half way, vote.



### Political pockets get tobacco lining

When asked, "Mind if I smoke?" comedian Steve Martin's sarcastic answer during his days of doing stand-up routines was always, "Why no, mind if I ... FART?"

Those who dare to light up these days may be the most oppressed minority group - and for good reason.

A study released Tuesday in the Journal of the American Medical Association reports that secondhand smoke invades the lungs of about 88 percent of nonsmokers.

Cigarette manufacturers deny that smoking is addictive and causes lung cancer. They're afraid that admitting to health hazards would make them vulnerable to product-liability suits. So they're buying friends in Sacramento.

Choosing to preserve "free enterprise" over public health, the Republicans promise to block any new restrictions on smoking and might even succeed in easing current laws. Lobbyists say the money is not intended to buy influence, but to support law makers who side with them.

What's the difference?

Cigarette makers are deceptive about their motives, the nature of their product and the risks of using it. Like Martin, they're ridiculous because no one believes them.

#### el Don Mailbox Policy

The el Don encourages expression of all views. Letters should be brief and to the point. All letters should include student ID number and may be edited for length and clarity. Letters to el Don may be delivered to room C-201, or mailed to RSC el Don, Mailbox, 17th at Bristol streets, Santa Ana, CA 92706. Include a phone number where you may be reached.

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For el Don advertising rates and information, contact Debi Carr at (714)564-5617. FAX 564-0821





# Flying too high

I can't help but wonder what kind of news coverage would have occurred had Jessica Dubroff successfully completed her cross-country flight. What would the caption read underneath her wistful, far-away expression on the cover of "Time" magazine instead of the current, "Who Killed Jessica?" (As if it were a homicide).

Would the media now be celebrating the courage of a 7 year-old pilot instead looking for the ones to blame for allowing an untimely end to the dream?

As fingers point accusingly at Lisa Blair Hathaway and Lloyd Dubroff, many are using the situation to generalize about the problems of children who become victims of their pushy parents.

Examples of other failed dreams such as baby ballerinas and gymnasts becoming anorexics or child actors spending adolescence in substance-abuse recovery are trotted out as evidence to support their claims.

Psychologists and sociologists, having been queried about the effect of over-zealous, indulgent parenting, lend credence to the theory that Jessica is just another statistic in the pile of kids whose childhoods were sacrificed for the sake of super-achievement.

Hindsight, however recent the view, seems to be providing many with 20-20 insight into the answers.

However, the outcome of a situation is not always a fitting standard by which to gauge its success or failure. Such perceptions assume that the ends justify the means.

Is this crystal-clear vision only available by the dark light of tragedy or can it be recognized in the brightness of a smiling family proudly displaying their prodigy?

Just where is the line that divides a supportive family

*When parents' expectations soar above their childrens' natural ability, dreams will eventually crash*

By Holly Mayo  
el Don Staff Writer

from a pushy one?

If we continue to blame those parents whose children don't manage to survive the rigors of extraordinary achievement and commend those whose offspring land a late-night spot on David Letterman, we are conveying an all too clear message: As long as you succeed, you can try whatever you want. If you don't succeed, something is wrong.

When extraordinary endeavors are attempted, the middle ground is razor thin, if not altogether absent. Once the Dubroff's flight plans were set into motion turning back disappeared from the agenda.

It is not unreasonable to question the motivation behind Jessica's media-laden flight.

It is a natural reaction to want to find the cause for such a profoundly disturbing accident. Finding a scapegoat is also in our nature. If Jessica couldn't become the icon of society's attraction to and worship of youthful heroism, atonement must be made.

Unfortunately, no atonement can restore the sparkle in Jessica's eyes or prevent another family from crossing the boundary separating children's aspirations from dreams directed by childish parents.

There is no scapegoat capable of assuming the blame that rests on society's shoulders for allowing the super-child ideal to become normalized.

If "Time" had been able to publish a victory photo of a record-breaking 7-year old instead, the situation would be no less compelling.

A tragedy should not have to be the reason for questioning the propriety of what was a misdirected, dangerous stunt from the onset.



## SCOREBOX



### BASEBALL

Tue., Apr. 23 **Next Game:**  
RSC 9 Saturday vs.  
OCC 8 Fullerton at  
2:30 p.m.

### SOFTBALL

Wed., Apr. 24 **Next Game:**  
RSC 1 Today vs.  
Saddleback 0 Irvine Valley  
at 3 p.m.

### TRACK AND FIELD

Fri., Apr. 19 **Next Meet:**  
Team scores Saturday in  
are not kept for San Diego  
Mt. SAC relays at 1 p.m.

### GOLF

Mon., Apr. 15 **Next Game:**  
Cuyamaca (1st) Monday at  
RSC (2nd) Singing Hills at  
Riverside (3rd) 7 a.m.

### SWIMMING

Fri., Apr. 19 **Next Meet:**  
(Men) Fri. - Sat. at  
RSC 35 Saddleback  
Palomar 137 at 10 a.m.

Fri., Apr. 19 **Next Meet:**  
(Women) Fri. - Sat. at  
RSC 40 Saddleback  
Palomar 163 at 10 a.m.

## Ladies clinch third place

### ▼ SOFTBALL: pitching pulls RSC past Saddleback

By Steve Castaneda  
Special to the el Don

**C**linching at least third place in the Orange Empire Conference standings, the Dons gained much needed momentum Wednesday when they defeated the Saddleback Gauchos, 1-0.

Going into the game, the Dons (OEC 14-5) were in a third place tie with Saddleback.

"This win was really big," catcher Carol Lizalde said. "We needed to build some momentum, not only for standings, but for the regional and state tournaments."

The shut-out victory was led by the strong pitching of freshman right-hander, Sheryl Anderson. Anderson struck out four batters and allowed only six hits.

"Sheryl is in the zone right now," assistant coach Renee Taylor said. "She gives our team confidence and without her we couldn't be the contenders we are."

But it was no easy task to shut down the Gauchos, who defeated the Dons 4-1 three weeks earlier.

Anderson gave up two hits in the top of the first and found the bases loaded with no outs.

Rancho's defense struggled as they shut down Saddleback without allowing a run.

The game was quickly turning into a defensive battle, with both teams having their problems at the plate.

Kristi Bolle shut down the Gaucho offense to end the third inning, stopping a potential run.

By the fourth inning, Anderson overpowered Gaucho hitters retiring Saddleback in the top of the fourth and fifth innings.

With two outs in the fourth, Anderson hit a shot up the middle past a diving second baseman.



Armando Mugica / el Don Photo

Tracy Wilkinson is flattened as she slides home in the bottom of the fourth.

RSC outfielder Tracy Wilkinson stepped up to the plate and smacked a ground ball to short stop Misty Thompson, who bobbled it and allowed Anderson to get into scoring position.

Dons' head coach, Kim Nutter, replaced Anderson with pinch runner Liz Perez.

With Perez on second, centerfielder Remy Amaro hit a dribbler toward third base.

Instead of going for the easy out at first base, Saddleback third baseman Treva Whitaker attempted to tag Perez at third.

Whitakers' tag hit Perez in the thigh with so much force, the ball rolled into the out-

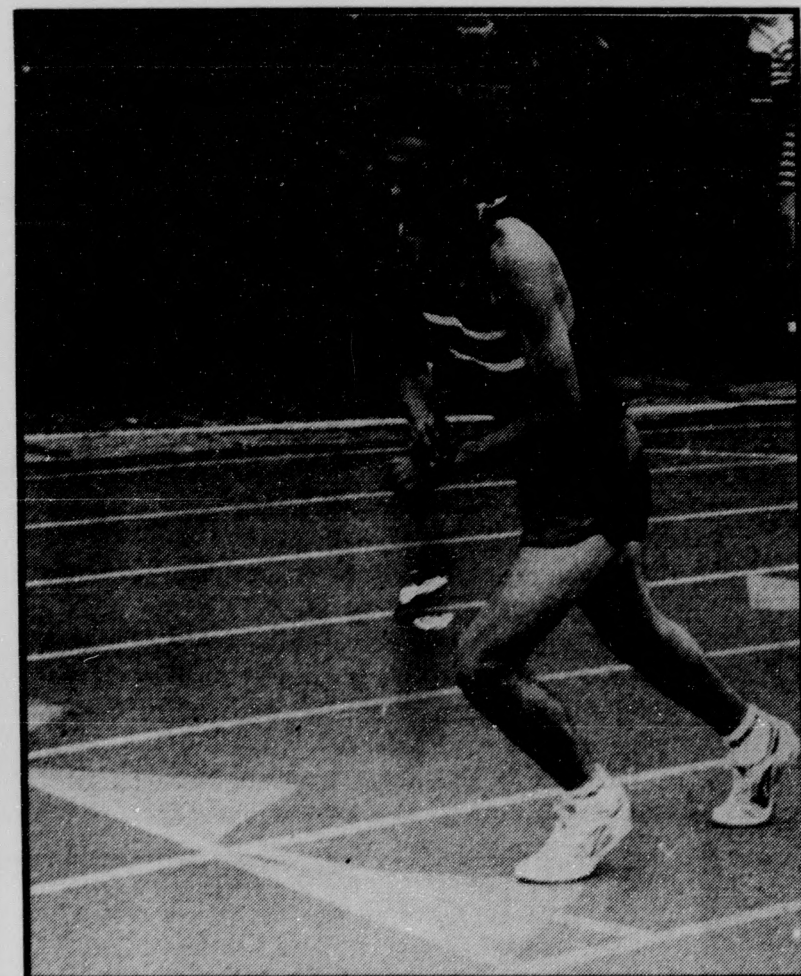
field, loading the bases for Bolle.

Bolle took advantage of the Gauchos errors by hitting a fly ball that fell into left field, allowing Perez to score.

As Perez crossed home, Wilkinson rounded third in an effort to score.

Left fielder Mindy Cook threw a perfect strike to Gaucho catcher Christina Loya in time to tag out a sliding Wilkinson, scoring the only run of the game.

"This was a very important victory for us," Nutter said. "We can make it all the way to state and I really feel if we get on a roll we could win it all."



Armando Mugica / el Don Photo

Jose Rangel was a part of the second place finish relay.

## Dons finish second in 4-mile relay at Mt. SAC

### ▼ TRACK: Patton takes first in pole vault at 10'

By Cliff H. Mason  
el Don Staff Writer

**J**ulie Patton reached new heights at the 38th annual Mt. San Antonio College relays Friday. The meet is one of the largest and oldest track meets in the United States, and the Dons did not go unnoticed.

Patton placed first in the women's pole vaulting competition with a vault of 10 feet, while sophomore George Arceo placed sixth in the discus competition with a throw of 148 feet.

Individual running events are excluded from the competition and team scores are not kept. All the races are relays, some of which are never seen in regular track meets.

The Lady Dons distance medley relay placed second, finishing with a time of 12 minutes, 58.2 seconds. Liz Pena ran the 400-meter stretch, followed by Ana Rozelez on the 800-meter, with Jennifer Florez on the 1,200-meter leg, and Elly Estrada as the 1,600-meter anchor.

"There is a lot of teamwork involved in medley relays. These are not races where the runner sits down after their event; they all stay there and cheer for the rest of the relay," said Al Siddons, track and field head coach.

Rancho's men placed third in the sprint medley. Their finishing time was 3 minutes, 33.1 seconds.

The four speed demons were

Cesar Catao, Bernard Hardaman, Bret Daeley and Brian Mitzel.

The Dons also performed well in the 4-mile relay.

They placed second in that grueling event, with an impressive 17 minute, 55 second finish time. Jose Rangel, Victor Viguera, Brian Mitzel and Ben Meija made up the relay.

"We had a lot of good times on our relays and I think everyone had a lot of fun," Siddons said.

Jim Sorensen, an RSC alumni, competed Sunday in the 1,600-meter. He is ranked eighth in the nation and he's an Olympics hopeful.

The Dons travel to San Diego, Saturday April 27, for conference finals.

Only qualified runners from Tuesday's preliminaries will participate.